

## AROUND THE GROUNDS

# EAA Aviation Museum Highlights

**YOUR VISIT TO Oshkosh** for EAA AirVenture 2022 isn't complete without a trip to the EAA Aviation Museum. Here's one example of the approximately 200 aircraft on display in this world-class facility.

## 2003 LOCKWOOD AIRCAM, N5084T

The versatile AirCam is the brainchild of Phil Lockwood. After working with wildlife photographers in partnership with Maxair in the early '80s, Lockwood established his own aviation consulting business and started designing an airplane specifically for aerial photography missions.

After the AirCam's 1994 appearance at SUN 'n FUN, demands were made for a production version. This new version featured a mono-coque aluminum design with a steel tube gear in place of the pod and boom construction of the first two aircraft, giving the production AirCam more stability and strength. The tail was enlarged to improve stability and control at very low speeds when photographers want to linger over a certain area.

EAA's AirCam (N5084T) is model No. 1 and was used for the National Geographic photo missions in the Republic of Congo. The AirCam proved to be a great photo platform for photographer Michael Nichols. The crew got up early each day and flew missions from dawn until about 8 a.m., when the good light was gone. Around 4 p.m., they would head out again until sunset. Due to the ongoing civil war and all the delays the team had encountered, they elected to store the AirCam and return to the site in the spring of 1994 to complete the photo shoot. The results of this expedition can be seen in the July 1995 issue of *National Geographic*.



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After two missions to Congo in 1993 and 1994, the AirCam was purchased by the National Geographic Society, which then donated it to Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park for use in research. During its service with the park, the aircraft was damaged in a landing accident.

It went unrepaired because of the remote location and the expense involved. Russ Solsvig, EAA 466754, an airline pilot, found out about the damaged AirCam and arranged to purchase it and ship it back to the United States, where he completely restored the aircraft. Solsvig later traded AirCam No. 1 to Lockwood for a new AirCam. Lockwood donated No. 1 to EAA in 2008.

Don't miss your chance to see this Lockwood AirCam, located in the museum lobby, and hundreds of other aircraft in the EAA Aviation Museum. 

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